

## Message Text

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12-S  
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AF-10 IO-14 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 NEA-14 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /173 W

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P 111204Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4071

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL UDORN

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

CINCPAC

DIA

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 9525

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: THANAT KHOMAN ON DIEGO GARCIA

REF: A. BANGKOK 8190; B. FBIS D110310Z JUN 74

SUMMARY: THANAT KHOMAN MADE SOME EXEMPORANEOUS REMARKS  
JUNE 7 ON THAI FOREIGN POLICY. HIS COMMENTS ON DIEGO  
GARCIA COULD AROUSE THAI SENSITIVITIES ABOUT U.S.  
RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM  
THAI BASES. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK'S FOREIGN POLICY  
ADVISOR THANAT KHOMAN EXTEMPORANEOUSLY ADDRESSED THE  
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB OF THAILAND (FCCT) JUNE 7.  
STRESSING THAT HIS REMARKS REFLECTED ONLY HIS PERSONAL  
OPINIONS, HE CALLED FOR A REVITALIZATION OF THAI FOREIGN  
POLICY AND A RESTRUCTURING OF THAI-AMERICAN RELATIONS.  
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THROUGHOUT THE EVENING HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE AMERICAN

MILITARY PRESENCE DID NOT SERVE THAI NATIONAL INTERESTS AND THAT THAILAND HAS NO CONTROL OVER AMERICAN MILITARY STATIONED HERE (MEMO ON THE SPEECH BEING POUCHED).

2. HE MADE REFERENCE TO DIEGO GARCIA ONCE DURING HIS SPEECH AND ANSWERED ONE QUESTION ON IT. AN EMBASSY OFFICER WHO WAS PRESENT REPORTS THAT THANAT ARGUED THAT, DESPITE THE APPEARANCES OF DETENTE, THE SOVIET-AMERICAN RIVALRY WAS AS INTENSE AS EVER. USING THE INDIAN OCEAN AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT INCREASED SOVIET SHIP MOVEMENTS HAVE RESULTED IN AMERICAN ACTIVITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA. EVEN THE AMERICAN BASES IN THAILAND ARE DRAWN INTO THIS RIVALRY AS UTAPAO HAS A NEW ROLE OF SUPPORTING RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS WATCHING SOVIET SHIPS. HE DREW THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS A DANGER THAT THAILAND COULD BE SUCKED INTO THE SOVIET-AMERICAN COMPETITION.

3. A NEWSMAN ASKED THANAT WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT OF THE DIEGO GARCIA BUILD-UP ON REGIONAL SECURITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. HE ANSWERED THAT HE DIDN'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT THE EFFECT MIGHT BE. HE DID NOT FEEL THAT DIEGO GARCIA, PER SE, WAS DETRIMENTAL TO THAILAND. IN FACT, HE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS THE BEST PLACE FOR A BASE.

4. COMMENT: THANAT HAS HAD SOME SYMPATHETIC HEARING WITHIN THAILAND WHEN HE STRESSES THAT THERE ARE NO FORMAL TREATIES BETWEEN THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES WHICH REGULATE THE PRESENCE OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES. THANAT INTENDS TO KEEP THIS ISSUE ALIVE THROUGH A BILL HE WILL SHORTLY INTRODUCE IN THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR HIS OUT-SPOKENNESS WHILE AN ADVISOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER (REF B), HE HAS FOUND A SAFE ISSUE WITH WHICH TO MAKE POLITICAL HAY AMONG THOSE OPPOSED TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND.

5. FINDING THE REAL THANAT IS A DIFFICULT PROPOSITION. DESPITE HIS PUBLIC STANCE, THANAT APPARENTLY DOES NOT FAVOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL; HE TOLD THE DCM MAY 29 THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BEST FOR THE U.S. TO GRADUALLY WITHDRAW AND

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CONSOLIDATE THE REMAINING TROOPS INTO ONE BASE.

6. THANAT'S MENTION OF DIEGO GARCIA WAS TO ILLUSTRATE HIS POINT THAT THAILAND COULD UNINTENTIONALLY BECOME INVOLVED IN RUSSIAN-AMERICAN RIVALRY. THANAT SEEMS TO BE PLAYING ON THAI SENSITIVITIES TO THE USE OF THAI BASES FOR OTHER THAN INDOCHINA RELATED ACTIVITIES. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SPOKESMAN PRACHA KHUNAKASEM TOLD THE

PRESS MARCH 28 THAT "THAILAND ADHERES TO THE PRINCIPLE  
THAT AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES ARE STATIONED IN THAILAND  
AT PRESENT FORIPHE SECURITY OF THIS REGION--THAT THEY  
ARE CONCERNED WITH THE UNQUIET (SIC) IN INDOCHINA ONLY."  
THERE HAS SO FAR BEEN NO LOCAL PRESS REACTION TO THANAT'S  
COMMENTS ON DIEGO GARCIA, BUT WE SHOULD NOT ANTICIPATE  
THAT THEY WILL GO UNNOTICED.  
KINTNER

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## Message Attributes

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